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130437Z Dec 01

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AGRE-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	COME-00	DODE-00
	DOT-00	DS-00	EB-00	FAAE-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	LAB-01	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	ACE-00	IRM-00	SSO-00
	SS-00	TRSE-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/004W
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0522
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 003691

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF AND AF/S

NSC FOR SENIOR DIRECTOR FRAZER

LONDON FOR GURNEY

PARIS FOR NEARY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/13/06

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: SADC MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE PLAYS IN HARARE,
ACT II: MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

REF: LUSAKA 2731

CLASSIFIED BY DCM REWHITEHEAD DUE TO 1.5 (B) AND (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY. THE LONG ANTICIPATED VISIT OF THE SADC MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE DEALING WITH THE ZIMBABWEAN SITUATION TOOK PLACE ON DECEMBER 10 AND 11, LONG ON RHETORIC BUT SHORT ON RESULTS. THE GOZ MANAGED TO CONTROL BOTH THE AGENDA AND THE FOCUS OF THE MEETING, WHICH YIELDED A LARGELY TOOTHLESS FINAL COMMUNIQUE. READOUTS FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES INDICATE THAT THE GOZ WAS SPARED SERIOUS CRITICISM FROM THEIR SOUTHERN AFRICAN BRETHREN, WHO SHOWED LITTLE SYMPATHY FOR "THE OTHER SIDE" OF THE EQUATION. WHILE IT MAY BE TOO EARLY TO WRITE OFF THE PROCESS ALTOGETHER, THE VISITING SADC MINISTERS SHOWED LITTLE STOMACH FOR CONFRONTING ZIMBABWE ABOUT ITS ESCALATING INTERNAL CRISIS. END SUMMARY.

THE MOZAMBIKAN TAKE

2. (C) IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR, MOZAMBIKAN HIGH COMMISSIONER SUMBANA DESCRIBED THE VISIT AS "GOOD." HE SAID THAT THE MINISTERS HAD AGREED, NOT SURPRISINGLY, THAT ZIMBABWE NEEDED TO MOVE FORWARD ON THE LAND REFORM ISSUE. THEY ALSO AGREED THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO FIND EXTERNAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE REFORM PROCESS, PRESUMABLY FROM BRITAIN. THEY ADMITTED TO CONTINUING PROBLEMS WITH VIOLENCE BUT OBSERVED THAT THE VIOLENCE WAS LESS SERIOUS THAN SIX MONTHS AGO.

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3. (C) SUMBANA SAID THAT THE GOZ ALSO AGREED TO DISCUSS OTHER RELATED ISSUES, INCLUDING ELECTIONS. THE GOZ AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO THE SADC-PF ELECTORAL NORMS AND STANDARDS WITH THE CAVEAT THAT THERE WAS NOT SUFFICIENT TIME LEFT TO IMPLEMENT ALL OF THESE BEFORE THE ELECTIONS, AND SPECIFICALLY ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION. HOWEVER, THEY WOULD NOT YIELD ON THE ISSUE OF CIVIL SERVANTS SERVING AS ELECTION MONITORS (VICE THE CIVIL SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES USED IN THE PAST, ALTHOUGH WE UNDERSTAND FROM OTHER SOURCES THERE MIGHT STILL BE MOVEMENT ON THIS). HE SAID THAT THERE WERE ASSURANCES THAT SADC-PF WOULD BE ABLE TO OBSERVE THE ELECTION, WITH OBSERVERS PERMITTED TO BEGIN THEIR WORK AT A STILL UNSPECIFIED DATE IN JANUARY. SUMBANA DOFFED HIS SADC HAT FOR A MOMENT AND POPPED ON HIS HONEST BROKER'S CAP. HE OBSERVED THAT THE GOZ SEEMED RELUCTANT TO PICK A FIGHT WITH THE U.S. AND ASKED WHAT MEASURES THE GOZ NEEDED TO TAKE IN REVISING THE ELECTORAL LAW TO SUIT US.

THE CFU TAKE

14. (C) COMMERCIAL FARMERS' UNION (CFU) VICE PRESIDENT MALCOLM VOWLES DESCRIBED TO DCM THE SADC MINISTERS' ENCOUNTER WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CFU, THE PRO-ZANU-PF ZIMBABWEAN FARMERS' UNION ZFU), AND THE ZAMBIAN JOINT RESETTLEMENT INITIATIVE (ZJRI), WHICH VOWLES REPRESENTED. HE SAID THAT THE CFU HAD RAISED THREE MAIN POINTS: THE NEW ARTICLE 8 REGULATIONS (THAT PERMIT FARM
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SEIZURE WITHIN 90 DAYS WITHOUT PRIOR REDRESS TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE COURT); NEW REGULATIONS LIMITING THE MAXIMUM SIZE OF FARMS; AND THE LACK OF CFU COURT ACCESS FOLLOWING THE SUPREME COURT RULING THROWING OUT THE RIGHT OF THE CFU TO CONTEST THE FAST-TRACK LAND REFORM PROGRAM ON CONSTITUTIONAL GROUNDS. THE CFU ALSO PRESENTED ITS MOST RECENT PRODUCTION ASSESSMENT.

15. (C) VOWLES SAID THAT THE SADC MINISTERS REACTED BY POSING "TOUGH" AND DETAILED QUESTIONS TO THE CFU, WHILE LOBBING ONLY A FEW SOFTBALLS TO THE ZFU AND ZJRI. HE TERMED THE GENERAL SADC REACTION AS UNSYMPATHETIC, ALTHOUGH NOT HOSTILE. THE UNDERLYING THEME SEEMED TO BE, "NOW THAT THE SUPREME COURT HAS RULED ON THE LEGALITY OF THE REFORMS, WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT?" ZFU VICE PRESIDENT WAS BY CONTRAST BOTH HOSTILE AND AGGRESSIVE, SNEERING AT THE CFU PRODUCTION ASSESSMENT AND INSISTING THAT LOST PRODUCTION FROM "WHITES" WOULD BE MORE OFFSET BY THE PRODUCTION FROM ENFRANCHISED "BLACKS" RESETTLED ON FERTILE LANDS AND SUPPORTED BY GOZ FUNDS AND AGRICULTURAL INPUTS. (IN ADDITION TO THE CFU/ZFU/ZJRI, THE MINISTERS ALSO MET WITH WAR VETS,

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 HARARE 003691

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CHIEFS, CHURCHMEN, COMMERCIAL FARM WORKERS, ZANU-PF AND
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MDC, BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS, AND MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES, THE SAME IF A SOMEWHAT THINNER LIST THAN IN THE INITIAL SEPTEMBER 10 AND 11 SADC HEADS OF STATE MEETING.)

A MARSHMALLOW COMMUNIQUE

16. (C) THE COMMUNIQUE (WHICH WE HAVE FAXED TO AF/S) WAS EVEN MORE OF A POWDER PUFF THAN THE ONE THAT EMERGED FROM THE SEPTEMBER SADC HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING (REFTEL). CHAIRPERSON LILIAN PATEL, THE MALAWIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, INDICATED "THAT RATHER THAN MEDIATING BETWEEN THE PARTIES, THE MANDATE OF THE TASK FORCE WAS TO FACILITATE DIALOGUE AMONG STAKEHOLDERS..." THE MINISTERS, AFTER A GOZ BRIEFING, "WELCOMED THE IMPROVED ATMOSPHERE OF CALM AND STABILITY." THE MINISTERS "WERE GRATIFIED TO LEARN THAT VIOLENCE ON THE FARMS HAD REDUCED SIGNIFICANTLY, AND THAT THE FEW REPORTED INCIDENTS WERE BEING DEALT WITH UNDER THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULE OF LAW, IRRESPECTIVE OF THE POLITICAL AFFILIATION OF THE ALLEGED PERPETRATORS." THEY ALSO "WELCOMED THE SUPREME COURT DECISION MADE IN NOVEMBER 2001, DECLARING THAT THE

(REFORM PROGRAM) WAS LAWFUL AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COUNTRY."

17. (C) THE MINISTERS, IN A VERY WELCOMING MOOD, ALSO "WELCOMED LEGISLATIVE AND OTHER MECHANISMS PUT IN PLACE TO GUARD AGAINST VIOLENCE AND ENSURE TRANSPARENCY..." THE MINISTERS "EXPRESSED CONCERN AT DISTORTED AND
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NEGATIVE PERCEPTION OF ZIMBABWE PROJECTED BY REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEDIA." REGARDING ESTABLISHMENT OF A PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED EARLIER AT THE HEAD OF STATE LEVEL, "IT WAS NOTED THAT MECHANISMS WERE ALREADY IN PLACE FOR PARTIES TO INTERACT..." THE COMMUNIQUE RECALLED THE 2000 SADC SUMMIT DECISION OPPOSING SANCTIONS AGAINST ZIMBABWE, REITERATED THE MINISTERS' OPPOSITION TO SANCTIONS, AND "CALLED UPON ALL CONCERNED PARTIES TO REFRAIN FROM IMPOSING SANCTIONS SUCH AS THE ZIMBABWE DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY BILL."

18. (U) THE FOLLOWING DELEGATES SIGNED THE COMMUNIQUE: ANGOLAN DEPUTY MINISTERS OF EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND AGRICULTURE SERAO AND SAMBENI AND VICE MINISTER OF DEFENSE RUFINO; BOTSWANA FONMIN MERAFHE; MALAWI DEFENSE MINISTER MUNYENYEMBE; MOZAMBIKAN PRESIDENTIAL MINISTER MADEIRA AND DEPUTY FONMIN PATRICIO; NAMIBIA'S DEPUTY FONMIN KALOMOH; SOUTH AFRICAN LABOR MINISTER MDLADLANA; AND ZIMBABWE FONMIN MUDENGHE.

COMMENT

19. (C) WE CANNOT AGREE WITH SUMBANA THAT THE VISIT WAS GOOD, OR ANYTHING CLOSE TO IT. IN FACT, IT IS HARD TO SEE THE VISIT AS ANYTHING OTHER THAN A NON-EVENT AT BEST, AND AT WORST A STEP BACKWARD ON SADC'S PART FROM THE TOUGH ISSUES AT HAND. AS A RESULT, THE GOZ ONCE AGAIN MANAGED TO CONTROL THE AGENDA AND FINAL COMMUNIQUE
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TO ITS ADVANTAGE. IT MAY BE TOO SOON TO WRITE THE SADC INITIATIVE OFF AS FAILED, BUT UNLESS FUTURE MISSIONS ARE WILLING TO TAKE A HARDER LINE AND OPT FOR SOLUTIONS RATHER THAN REGIONAL SOLIDARITY, WE DO NOT EXPECT THIS PROCESS TO YIELD ANY MEANINGFUL SOLUTIONS TO ZIMBABWE'S MULTIPLYING PROBLEMS.

SULLIVAN

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